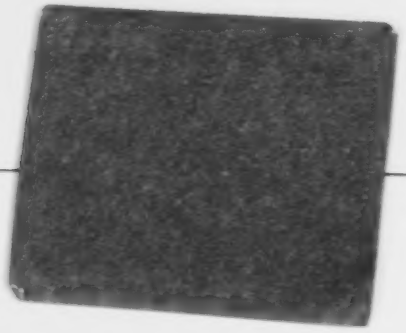
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT



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LETTER DATED 21 JANUARY 1997 ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING A STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CLINTON FOR THE OPENING OF THE 1997 SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Attached is a copy of a Presidential Statement for the opening of the 1997 session of the Conference on Disarmament issued on 17 January 1997.

I would be grateful if this could be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to all member States and non-member participant States of the Conference.

(Signed): Stephen J. Ledogar
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Statement by President Clinton for the Opening of the 1997 CD Session

In my message to the Conference on Disarmament three years ago, I urged the negotiation of a comprehensive nuclear test ban at the earliest possible time. Your success in that negotiation, and the subsequent adoption of the Treaty by the United Nations General Assembly, will help create a safer world. The successful conclusion of the negotiation is evidence of the Conference's potential to respond to the challenges it now faces.

Now the Conference on Disarmament should take the next steps on the road to a more secure world:

-- prompt conclusion of a ban on producing fissile material for use in nuclear explosives. Effectively cutting off the spigot for more nuclear weapons is a necessary step toward, and would greatly contribute to, the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament.

-- negotiation as soon as possible of a comprehensive, global ban on anti-personnel landmines. These weapons of war have caused terrible suffering to innocent civilians and represent an enormous obstacle to restoring a more hopeful life after a conflict has ended. All the children of the world deserve to walk the earth in safety.

I call on the Conference to press forward with a renewed sense of purpose, to demonstrate to the world its capability to take these key steps to advance the process of nuclear and conventional disarmament.